

important. A great deal of funding and resources has been expended in Afghanistan, much of it on important and necessary programs. But with the withdrawal of international troops and a commensurate decrease of funds going into the country, there is a distinct possibility that Afghanistan could experience an economic depression which could have dramatic security implications. There is time now to address this problem by conducting a careful review of all U.S. assistance to the country. Those programs that are not sustainable should be phased out. While this may have painful short-term consequences, it will be better for the long-term viability of the Afghan economy.

The United States and the international community should consistently reemphasize that while there will be a transition in 2014, this does not mean the wholesale withdrawal and disengagement from Afghanistan. The Strategic Partnership Agreement has helped send this message. The United States will still have significant security concerns in the country and should maintain a strong counterterrorism capability. Work will still remain in providing support and assistance to the Afghan National Security Forces. The international community can also continue to play a key role in helping Afghan society to develop.

All of this falls squarely within our national security interests, and all parties in Afghanistan and in the region should hear this message.

Finally, I will end with a few comments about Pakistan. I continue to believe that Pakistan is too important to U.S. interests for us to sever ties or significantly diminish the relationship. We know we have had trouble in our relationship, but we know a couple of other things as well. Pakistan has lots of nuclear weapons. It is a hotbed of Islamic extremism. It also provides the best logistics routes for our supplies headed into and out of Afghanistan, and Pakistan will play an essential role in ensuring the transition to a peaceful Afghanistan.

Despite the seemingly insurmountable challenges and at times divergent strategic interests, we must continue to find a way forward and work together where our interests do overlap. Pakistan has made significant sacrifices in countering extremism within its borders, mostly against forces that represent a direct threat to the state itself. It has yet to go after the Haqqani network in a serious way. It continues to provide a haven for the Quetta Shura Taliban, which is the headquarters of those seeking to destabilize the Afghan State.

Pakistan has not taken adequate measures to confront the proliferation and trade in illicit bombmaking materials which have killed thousands of its own citizens and hundreds and hundreds of our U.S. troops across the border in Afghanistan. Taking all of this into account, there is a significant ele-

ment of Pakistani society that we cannot consider allies. This is why I strongly support the conditionality built into U.S. assistance to Pakistan, which requires that the Pakistani authorities make significant progress in countering terrorism and attacking IED networks. If they do not take steps to address these issues, this assistance will be significantly cut, and it should be.

For more than 2 years I have worked to address this critical problem of improvised explosive devices, which are responsible for the majority of deaths and injuries among our servicemembers in Afghanistan. The primary explosive ingredient in IEDs used in southern Afghanistan is calcium ammonium nitrate, CAN. It is also used as a fertilizer and is produced in factories in Pakistan. I have been adamant that the Pakistani Government must significantly increase its commitment to regulating the bomb components and preventing them from being smuggled across the border into Afghanistan.

In June 2010 I introduced S. Res. 570, which called for an increased effort by Pakistan to effectively monitor and regulate the manufacture, sale, transport, and use of ammonium nitrate fertilizer in order to prevent its entrance into Afghanistan. The resolution passed the Senate unanimously on June 28, 2010.

During our recent visit to Pakistan, I discussed this issue with several senior government officials, as did Senator BENNET, Senator WHITEHOUSE, and Senator BLUMENTHAL. The Pakistani leaders expressed an interest in countering the proliferation of bomb components and presented to us an action plan for interdicting these materials. However, the proof of their commitment has yet to be seen through the implementation of this plan.

In December of 2011, I introduced an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act that would require the Secretary of Defense to certify that Pakistan is demonstrating a continuing commitment to and making significant efforts toward the implementation of a strategy to counter IEDs. This provision, unfortunately, was removed during the conference committee. The final version of the bill requires the Secretary of Defense to produce a report on Pakistan's efforts to counter IEDs.

I continue to believe combating the threat posed by IEDs is one area where our interests do in fact overlap with Pakistan. At this time of frayed relations, IEDs continue to kill Pakistanis, Afghans, and, of course, Americans on the battlefield. By working together against this common threat, we can begin to rebuild confidence in the relationship and make progress toward more vexing strategic issues that affect our countries.

In September of 2010, I gave a speech on Afghanistan and Pakistan at the Army War College in Carlisle, PA. Former Secretary of War Elihu Root

believed that the Army War College was established in 1903, "not to promote war, but to preserve peace by intelligent and adequate preparation to repel aggression."

That is what Secretary Root said all those years ago. As we look forward to 2014 and a long-term relationship with the people of Afghanistan, all of our support for representative political institutions, improving the security environment, and Afghan social and economic development are intelligent and adequate preparation to repel aggression.

The next year and a half will be very consequential. If the United States works to strengthen representative institutions, bolsters the Afghan security forces, and maintains sustainable development assistance, all will pay dividends for our peace and security for years to come.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN REAUTHORIZATION ACT of 2012

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, last month, the Senate came together and passed the Leahy-Crapo Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2012. Our legislation takes some much needed steps to help the most vulnerable victims of domestic and sexual violence, and it was passed with significant bipartisan support. The Leahy-Crapo Violence Against Women Act was an example of what we accomplish when we put politics aside and work to find real solutions to real problems facing real Americans.

Few laws have had a greater impact on the lives of women in this country than the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). By shining a light on the insidious crimes of domestic and sexual violence, this law's initial passage nearly 20 years ago sent a powerful message that violence against women would no longer be tolerated. The days of dismissing these crimes with a joke or a shrug were over. The resources, training and law enforcement tools provided by VAWA transformed the criminal justice and community-based response to abuse. It gave support and protection to the victims who for generations had been blamed, humiliated and ignored.